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INDIVIDUALITY AND FREEDOM.

IN the present paper I wish to discuss the relation between the problem of freedom and the conception of human individuality. It is often asserted that if we deny the existence of real alternatives in the choices of men, we rob 'personality' of all its significance, that unless the will is 'free,' in the sense of there being real alternatives, we have no true individuality. It is the correctness of this assertion that I wish to consider.

Our first task is to try to make clear to ourselves what we mean by individuality. An exhaustive study of the concept would lead us beyond the limits of this paper, but we can, I think, give an account that will be sufficient for the purposes of our discussion.¹ The ordinary conception of an 'individual' seems to include three chief factors,—unity, uniqueness, and completeness or self-sufficiency. We shall consider each of these briefly.

That individuality always involves some sort of unity will hardly be denied. That which is in no sense one is in no sense an individual; and the more truly a thing can be called one, the more truly can it be called an individual. We must distinguish, however, between two aspects of unity,—the quantitative aspect or numerical unity, and the qualitative aspect or inner coherence. Both quantitative and qualitative unity are essential to any high degree of individuality, but the qualitative is the more important of the two. The lowest phase of unity is exemplified in the mere aggregate,—for instance, in a heap of stones. Here there is numerical unity of a sort, but inner coherence is almost or wholly lacking. The heap of stones is, in a sense, one, and as

¹ The purpose of this paper limits us to the ordinary notion of individuality. Such an analysis as Professor Royce, *e. g.*, attempts in his Supplementary Essay to *The Conception of God* (pp. 135 ff.) is not called for. I wish simply to show that human individuality, in the sense in which we ordinarily take it, is not in any way endangered by the denial of real alternatives in men's choices. This limitation of the problem seems justifiable because the protests against such denial are commonly made from the point of view of the ordinary conception.

one it may also be called an individual thing. But unless it is more than an aggregate, unless as a heap it fulfills a certain purpose, — *e. g.*, the marking of a goal, — its unity, and hence its individuality, is of the lowest grade. A single stone is more truly one ; its numerical unity is more obvious, and it has a certain small degree of inner coherence, — the mechanical coherence of its particles. A plant, in turn, has more unity, more inner coherence, than a stone ; a highly organized plant, more than one of the lower forms of the vegetable kingdom. And with the progress in unity, there is a corresponding progress in individuality : the single stone has more individuality than the heap of stones ; the plant, more than the stone ; the highly organized plant, more than the less highly organized one.

It is obvious that qualitative unity involves multiplicity and complexity. From the quantitative point of view, the fresh-water hydra is just as truly one as the human body is ; but from the qualitative point of view the latter has a much greater degree of unity. If a fresh-water hydra be cut into halves, each portion, under ordinary conditions, will regenerate its missing parts and will then perform all the necessary functions of life ; but if the human body be cut into halves, both portions will die. We have the highest unity in a whole composed of many different, but firmly coherent, parts.

Qualitative unity, as involving multiplicity and complexity, leads us naturally to uniqueness, the second element in individuality. That is unique which is unlike all other things, which is, in greater or less degree, different from everything else. Uniqueness, like unity, has two aspects, a quantitative and a qualitative. In the lowest sense of the term, anything is unique, just as, in the lowest sense, anything may be called a unity. Uniqueness of the lowest kind is conferred by temporal and spatial position. Whatever occupies a given space at a given time is, in this respect at least, unique, different from everything else. Position in time and space serves to distinguish one grain of sand from a second grain, which, in all other respects, is exactly like it. And in the degree in which each of these grains of sand is unique, it is also individual ; as Schopenhauer has said, space and time are principles

of individuation. But, obviously, we have here a low form of individuality ; uniqueness which is merely quantitative cannot bestow upon its possessor individuality of a high order. For this, qualitative uniqueness is essential.¹ And, within limits, the degree of individuality increases with the qualitative uniqueness ; the more complex the organism is, — the more qualitative differences there are which distinguish it from all other organisms, — the more individual it is. The human being represents a higher type of individuality than the most highly organized plant or brute, because the play of his mental life gives to him a greater degree of qualitative difference from the other members of his kind than is possessed by any brute or plant. Similarly, men themselves differ greatly in the degree of their individuality ; and, speaking generally, a man is more individual, the more clearly his inner life and his mental characteristics are differentiated from those of his fellows. But, as has already been hinted, this is true only within certain limits. The uniqueness which constitutes the truest individuality rests upon a broad basis of likeness. All normal human beings share in a certain common nature ; and the most individual man is not he who violates this common nature. There is a point beyond which unlikeness ceases to be valued by us ; individuality has passed over into *bizarrerie*. It is not that, beyond a certain limit, individuality does not appeal to us as desirable ; it is rather that we feel that that which is bizarre is less truly individual than that in which the uniqueness recognizes certain bounds. We do not regard the crank as having more originality than the genius, but as having less. The genius is always, indeed, a highly differentiated being ; but at the same time, unless a man can make us feel that he speaks the common language of humanity, that he sounds the deep note of universal passion, that he gives expression, — in his own way, — to the experience of us all, we refuse him the name of genius ; we refuse to recognize in him individuality of the highest order.

¹ It is true, of course, that 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' are not wholly unrelated terms. As Hegel has shown, differences in degree often pass over, by almost imperceptible stages, into qualitative differences. But the general distinction between qualitative and quantitative uniqueness is clear, and of this distinction my statement holds.

Apparently, then, the uniqueness which is a factor in individuality must rest upon a basis of similarity. This is true, at least, in the case of an individual which is, at the same time, part of a larger whole. Reality taken in its entirety is unique in a somewhat different sense ; and if we say that the whole of reality is an individual, it is obvious that we must modify our conception of individuality. Into this question, however, we need not enter ; for our concern is to determine the nature of *human* individuality, and the human being, certainly, is an individual which is part of a larger whole.¹

We pass on to the third factor in individuality. We have spoken of it as completeness or self-sufficiency ; but in its higher degrees it may also be called self-direction. That some measure of independence is essential to our notion of individuality will hardly be questioned. The hand is less truly an individual than the body, because it is in much smaller degree sufficient unto itself. And, in general, the more power any organism has of directing its own life, the more truly individual it is. Hence, we regard the animal as having more individuality than the plant of equally complex structure. And in the animal kingdom itself, the higher we rise in the scale, the greater becomes the self-sufficiency or power of self-direction, and the greater the individuality. With the development of the rational faculty in man, this power is enormously increased ; and for this reason, among others, we have in man a higher type of individuality than we find in any brute. Similarly, within the human race the degree of individuality varies with the power of self-direction. A man who has no opinions of his own, who borrows from others his theory of life and his code of morals, whose choices seem to be decided by the play of circumstances, is said to lack individuality.

In our consideration of uniqueness, we saw that, beyond certain limits, it does not conduce to what we ordinarily mean by individuality. The case of self-sufficiency is somewhat different. It is clear that the human being, since he is part of a whole, can

¹ That the human being is, in some sense, part of a whole every one except the mythological solipsist will, I suppose, admit. The most thorough-going pluralist will hardly carry his doctrine of the independence of the individual to the point of denying this.

never attain to complete self-sufficiency. But whereas, we think that a man is more truly individual who does not depart too far from the rest of his kind, we do not feel that power of self-direction can exist in such degree as to destroy the individuality. We recognize the fact that no human being has complete power of self-direction, but we regard this as a limitation of his individuality. Here, at any rate, the individuality of the part seems to point to a higher individuality, which could be possessed, if at all, only by the whole of reality.¹

What we must say, then, seems to be this. The individuality of the part implies unity, uniqueness, and some degree of self-sufficiency. In its higher forms, the unity involves great inner complexity, while the uniqueness rests upon a broad basis of similarity. Finally, while, in general, individuality increases with the degree of self-sufficiency, yet, by its very nature, the part cannot be completely self-sufficient. Other things being equal, that part will be most truly individual which has the highest degree of independence that is compatible with its fulfilling its function in the whole. More than this, it seems, we cannot say; but this is all that we need for our present purposes.

What, now, is the bearing of this conception of individuality upon the problem of freedom? The question actually at issue to-day, the *live* question in the discussion, is that of 'real alternatives.' Confronted with the necessity of deciding between two opposed courses of action, *a* and *b*, I choose, let us say, *a*. The question in dispute, as I understand it, is: Was it really possible for me to choose *b* instead of *a*, possible, *i. e.*, in the sense that I could have chosen *b* without anything, either in myself or in the attendant circumstances, being different from what it was? To answer this question in the affirmative is to accept, and to answer it in the negative is to reject, the doctrine of real alternatives.²

¹ I say 'if at all' because, while it seems clear that the whole of reality has self-sufficiency and a certain kind of uniqueness, its possession of any high degree of unity is often questioned.

² Though some who call themselves 'indeterminists' might dissent, I think that we are justified in saying that this is the vital point in the present-day discussion of 'freedom'. And at least three prominent champions of 'freedom' seem so to regard it. Cf. James, "The Will to Believe and other Essays" (1897), pp. 150 ff.; Schiller, "Studies in Humanism" (1907), pp. 392 ff.; Perry, "Freedom as Practical Postulate," *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. XIII, pp. 42, 46, 51.

It is unfortunate that we have no words to indicate the respective opponents and champions of this doctrine. I should be inclined to use the words 'determinism' and 'indeterminism' to mark the distinction but for the fact that some who reject the theory of real alternatives are unwilling to be labeled as 'determinists.' And it must be admitted that 'determinism' has a certain connotation that is not involved in the mere denial of real alternatives. It seems better, therefore, to discuss the question without employing these labels.¹

A word of explanation is necessary before we enter upon the discussion. I am not primarily concerned with attacking the doctrine of real alternatives. My purpose is defensive, — namely, to show that there is nothing in the denial of real alternatives which should, in itself, prevent our conceiving of the human being as having the three requisites of individuality which were brought out in our analysis.

Let us begin with unity. That the human self is a complete unity no one would be so bold as to assert. The lack of consistency in our opinions, the variability of our feelings and our purposes, the sense of inner discord, all this shows indubitably that we fall far short of that complete inner coherence which forms part of our ideal of individuality. But the fact remains that, other things being equal, the more harmonious and coherent a personality is, the more individuality we ascribe to it. Granting, then, that the human being only partially fulfills this requirement, our question is, what unity has to do with the doctrine of real alternatives in human choice. So far as I can see, it touches the doctrine at only one point. The denial of real alternatives implies the insistence upon the continuity of the moral life. When we say that the man who has made a certain choice could not have decided otherwise unless he had been, in some respect, a different sort of man, we assert the vital connection

¹ 'Freedom,' of course, is still more misleading. Professor James, with his humorous reference to "the word-grabbing game" (*op. cit.*, pp. 149, 179), has called attention to the fact that determinists and indeterminists alike have an ardent affection for the term and are equally anxious to be known as believers in 'freedom.' The reason for this is not far to seek. The word has so many associations with what we hold highest and dearest, — with political liberty, with intellectual and social opportunity, — that the desire is by no means unnatural.

between what one is and what one does. It is because we regard the man's act, not as something externally connected with him, but as, in deepest truth, his very self that we say, *He* could not have chosen otherwise. The denial of real alternatives, then, instead of being in any way hostile to our conception of the self as unitary, is fully in harmony with it,¹ and seems, indeed, in closer harmony than the assertion of the doctrine is.

I think we may say, then, that so far as the element of unity is concerned, individuality does not suffer from the denial of real alternatives. Indeed, all the objections which men most commonly feel to this denial seem to be connected with the other two factors. We shall, therefore, devote the rest of our discussion to them. It will be convenient to begin with the last one, with self-sufficiency. We have already said that this characteristic cannot belong to the human being in the highest measure. We are "members one of another," and we must pay the costs, as well as reap the advantages, of this fact. The tremendous force of heredity, the subtle influences of other personalities upon ours, these we can no more escape than we can avoid taking air into our lungs. But when all the considerations of this sort have been urged, it remains true that we have a certain measure of self-dependence. And we must now inquire whether the denial of real alternatives is consistent with the affirmation that the human being has a moderate degree of independence.

The believer in real alternatives will make haste to tell us that it is not. The theory which we are defending, he declares, leaves

¹ To this, the believer in real alternatives might raise the objection that it asserts a greater unity in human nature than actually exists. A character that is completely self-consistent and coherent, he might urge, could act, under given circumstances, in only one way. But for any being that lacks this perfect coherence there may be, in many cases, real alternatives. (Cf. Schiller, *op. cit.*, pp. 399 ff.) My reply to this would run somewhat as follows. There is, of course, a sense in which one might say that two quite different acts are possible for the ordinary man. His personality is not perfectly harmonious; there are in him opposed tendencies, conflicting desires. Hence, you may say that, taking the man as a whole,—a whole of many selves,—each of the opposed courses of action appeals to something in him and is possible for him. But in the moment of decision, the self which chooses is fairly coherent. It is not many selves; for so, there could be no choice. One of the many selves chooses. And if there is any bond of union between the self and its acts, this choosing self could not find its expression in *either one* of two directly opposed courses, but only in one.

no room for the independence of the individual. If you say that the choice which I have just made could not have been other than it is unless something, either in myself or in the circumstances, had been different, you are virtually admitting that this choice of mine was determined long ago,—at my birth, nay, ages before my birth. And if this be true, it is mere mockery to suggest that I have any power of self-direction. Let us at least be honest with ourselves and face the bitter fact that we are mere puppets, controlled by some external force, that all our deep-rooted conviction of our responsibility, all our quivering sense of the importance of our choices, is illusory. There is no middle ground between the two positions: either real alternatives or complete lack of the power of self-direction.

I am far from wishing to deny that these considerations have weight. There are few of us, I think, however strongly we may be convinced of the untenability of the doctrine of real alternatives, who do not, in certain moments, feel the force of an appeal like this. None the less, it seems to me to involve more than one misconception. In the first place, as I look at the matter, it is the *assertion* of real alternatives that is actually fatal to the belief in man's power of self-direction. If, for the self of a given moment, two opposed courses of action are equally possible, how can we say that either one of them is really representative of that self, is *its* choice? My self, in the moment of choice, is not anything and everything, but something particular. And how we can say that from this particular self either one of two utterly different actions can issue, I cannot see. If both actions are equally possible, this can only be because the choice does *not* proceed from the self. If I really have the power of self-direction, my act must be one with me; and two utterly unlike acts could not be equally one with the me of a given moment.

I suspect, however, that it is of little use to dwell upon this point. To those of us who accept it, it seems hardly conceivable that any one can believe the opposite, and our opponents have, doubtless, as great difficulty in understanding how we can accept it. We may pass on, therefore, to another consideration. We have said that in certain moments the appeal for real alternatives

strikes a sympathetic chord in the hearts of most of us. And it may be useful to inquire how this feeling of sympathy is to be accounted for. If we reject the doctrine of real alternatives and yet are conscious of sometimes having the feeling,—as I, for one, am,—it is incumbent upon us to try to analyze it. Before we are through with this analysis, it will have carried us over from the conception of self-direction to that of uniqueness.

What, then, is the reason for our shrinking from the thought that in the case of a choice which we have made, we could not, being just what we were, have decided differently? It seems to me that there are four chief reasons. The first of these is a real misunderstanding, a misunderstanding which is continually reappearing after it has been corrected. Very frequently, when we are told, 'You could not have chosen otherwise,' there is, implicit in our thought, the idea that we might have desired to choose differently and have been unable. The thought which the words suggest to us is of something that can thwart our will. We know, perhaps, that this is not what is meant; we are told, at any rate, that,—physical compulsion excepted,—there is nothing save ourselves that can prevent our acting in a certain way. But in spite of this, we smuggle in, almost unconsciously, the idea which alters the whole situation. The consequence is that we think of ourselves *as not being able to choose that which we really desire*. In the dim background of our consciousness, there lurks the thought of a thwarted self, a self compelled by some mysterious power,—the force of hereditary tendency, the influence of environment, the fatal power of its past choices,—to do that which it *would* not do.

Closely connected with this is another consideration that will help to explain further the feeling of which we are speaking. It is sometimes said that whereas, in the case of human choice, we shrink from the thought that there are no real alternatives, most of us are quite ready to believe this in regard to the divine mind; we do not hesitate to say that God, being what he is, can act only in the way in which he does act. This has suggested to me the thought that our so-called 'yearning for freedom' is, in part, a yearning for complete self-sufficiency. It does not dis-

press us to think that an 'infinite' being could not act in another way than that in which he does act, because we see clearly, in this case, that the 'could not' has no reference to any power other than his own. If, then, we were but infinite we should not shrink from the thought that our choices could not be other than they are. It is because we realize our limitations, because we recognize the fact that we are only a part of reality, that we shrink. For to say of us that we can act only in a certain way seems to put the ultimate source of the 'can' in something not ourselves. Our 'yearning for freedom,' then, is an expression of our sense of our own limitation, is the longing of the spirit for greater independence and self-sufficiency than it is conscious of possessing. But this, I think, cannot be held to constitute a valid objection to the denial of real alternatives. All that it amounts to is that we should like to be more nearly self-sufficient than we actually are.

The third reason why many persons are unwilling to think that there are no real alternatives expresses itself in a protest against the doctrine with which we are all familiar. If there are no real alternatives, it is urged, the choice that I am to make to-morrow is *already* determined, was determined ages ago. But if this be true, it robs human action of its significance, takes from life all its vivid sense of real happenings, of momentous things to be decided, of great issues depending upon us. We still live on and go through our daily round of work and play. But the deep sense of the meaning of life, the consciousness that *we* are contributing to reality, that we are helping to determine the fate of ourselves and others, — all this is gone, and with it all zest and passion die out. So, human life, which might have been great and glorious if only the philosophers had left us our vivid sense of 'freedom,' becomes 'aimless, helpless, hopeless.'

It will be convenient to postpone the answer to this objection until we have considered the last of our four reasons. This has quite as much to do with uniqueness as with self-sufficiency, and will thus lead us on to the remaining element in our conception of individuality. This last reason has its source in the belief that unless there are real alternatives in human choice, any one

who knew a certain man through and through could tell in advance precisely how he would act under given circumstances; that, to quote the words of John Stuart Mill, "given the motives which are present to an individual's mind, and given likewise the character and disposition of the individual, the manner in which he will act may be unerringly inferred; that if we knew the person thoroughly, and knew all the inducements which are acting upon him, we could foretell his conduct with as much certainty as we can predict any physical event."¹

Mill himself, it will be remembered, maintains that there is no good reason why any one should object to this supposed consequence of the denial of real alternatives. Unfortunately, however, the ordinary man does object to it seriously. While, in many cases, it does not distress him to learn that a certain choice which he has made was predicted, he cannot bear the thought that some one, knowing him completely at his birth and foreseeing all the external circumstances of his life, could confidently foretell how he would act under every one of these circumstances. The reason for his objection is, I think, twofold. In the first place, if all my choices can be thus resolved into the tendencies which I inherited from my forebears and the external influences to which I have been subjected, what is there, in this whole life of mine, that *I* have done? What has become of that power of self-direction which is one of the essential factors in individuality? And what has become, in the second place, of that other factor which we call uniqueness? For the supposition that any one could thus predict all the details of my thought and feeling and conduct seems to involve the assumption that in my essential nature I am like every one else. He who could thus foretell my life would have changed me into an abstract formula, which he could deal with as he could with a formula of mathematics. And against such transformation of our palpitating life, with its vivid sense of its uniqueness, its individual worth, our spirit rises in passionate protest.²

¹ "Logic," Bk. VI, Chap. II, § 2.

² No one has better voiced this feeling than Mr. Bradley, in his essay on "The Vulgar Notion of Responsibility" (*Ethical Studies*, Essay I). See particularly pp. 16, 18 f.

And well it may. If this is what the denial of real alternatives means, it is no wonder that men hesitate to make it. I hope to show, however, that this is not the inevitable consequence of such a denial.¹ The first thing to be said, it seems to me is this: if the denial of real alternatives has for its consequence the theoretical possibility of infallible prediction,² it is certainly hostile to the conceptions of uniqueness and self-direction; but that it has this logical consequence is, so far as I can see, pure assumption. If there were no real alternatives and *if a man were not in a very true sense unique*, it would follow logically that one who had knowledge of a certain kind could foretell all his actions. But without this second hypothesis it does not logically follow. For if the man is unique, we have not, and cannot conceivably have, sufficient *data* for predicting how he will act in all cases.

My own conviction is, on the one hand, that the doctrine of real alternatives is fatal to the conception of 'choice,' and on the other hand, that every element of reality is, in some sense or other, unique.³ This uniqueness is found in unusual degree in the human being. Every human life, and every choice in that life, is something unique. Now if this be true, it follows that such prediction as we were objecting to above is, not only practically, but also theoretically, impossible. For that which is unique cannot by any possibility be infallibly predicted.⁴ Even if you knew everything about me; if my whole past and all the past of my ancestors for countless generations were open to your gaze; if,—to suppose the impossible,—you had penetrated the

¹ Many determinists, indeed, have assumed that it is. And this is one reason why I have not used the word 'determinism,' in the present paper, to designate the position which I am defending.

² I say 'theoretical' because we all admit that our *actual* predictions of conduct are, at best, only highly probable.

³ 'Every element of reality,' I have said. But of course all that is needed for the purposes of the argument is what immediately follows, that every human being and every real choice is unique.

⁴ Humanly speaking, *i. e.* What a divine intelligence could or could not do, I hardly feel qualified to suggest. It seems safe to say, however, that no mind could exactly foretell my future save one,—if such a one be possible,—to whose gaze the future is open just as the present is to ours. And of such an intelligence it would hardly be accurate to say that it *foretells*.

inmost recesses of my thought and feeling,—even so, you could not infallibly predict how I would act at a certain future moment of great temptation. For we can predict only on the basis of likeness to the past, and we can predict infallibly only where the likeness is complete. Now this requirement of complete resemblance is never met in the case of any real choice on the part of a moral agent. In any real choice we have a complex set of conditions which has never, in all the history of the past, been precisely duplicated; infallible prediction is, therefore, a sheer impossibility. It is true that those who know us well are often able to foretell our conduct and our mental attitudes with a large measure of assurance. They can tell, *i. e.*, how we are likely to feel and act under circumstances which are very similar to others in which they have known us to be placed in the past. But there are two factors which tend to make the prediction more or less uncertain. The circumstances are never precisely the same again, and we ourselves are never precisely the same. Thus the prediction can never rightfully claim to be more than highly probable.

But can we, then, predict anything infallibly,—any event in the outside world even? Here, too, in the physical world,—if my theory of the nature of reality be correct,—everything that happens is in some measure unique. Strictly speaking, therefore, no event, in its concrete fulness, can be infallibly predicted. This concrete fulness natural science tries to express in abstract formulæ; and in so far as the event can be reduced to a set of such formulæ, in so far it can be foretold. But what science foretells is always, after all, only a certain aspect of the total event. The abstract formulæ are correct, perhaps, from their limited point of view. But they are never adequate to the fulness of reality.

The matter may be put briefly in this fashion: In so far as an event is not unique, in so far,—granting certain conditions of knowledge on our part,—it can be predicted. Now, in the case of physical happenings, it may be possible so to limit ourselves to a particular aspect of reality that we can foretell with complete assurance. That is, we can say, Given ordinary air of a certain temperature and humidity, a definite fall in its temperature, without change in any other of its conditions, will be followed by a

precipitation of moisture. We can predict here, because we have arbitrarily so limited our view of reality that what we are dealing with is precisely similar to something which we have experienced before. But try to do this with a human being, and what is the result? In order so to limit your view of him that infallible prediction would be, even theoretically, possible, you would have to disregard everything in him that is unique; and that in him which is unique — is the very essence of him.

It seems to me that we have removed the supposed difficulty with regard to the possibility of prediction. We may now turn back to our other objection, namely, that if there are no real alternatives in human choice, all our sense of real happenings, of actual contributions which we make to reality, of the vital importance of our decisions, becomes illusory. Here, again, my purpose is simply to show that this is not a necessary consequence of the denial of real alternatives, taken in itself. A theory which maintains that time and change have no part in the fundamental nature of reality is, to say the least, difficult to reconcile with a belief in the vital significance of human choice; for 'choice' seems to have no meaning left if time and happenings are not real. If, however, one maintains that time and change are of the very essence of the real, the case is different.

It is no part of my purpose to prove that reality is essentially temporal. Neither do I care to inquire here whether it is possible to unite the two aspects of timelessness and temporality in such a way as fully to preserve the rights of the latter. I wish simply to consider what are the consequences for human individuality if we assert the fundamental reality of time and yet deny that there are alternatives in human choice.

If we say that time is real and if we add to this the assertion, which we have already made, that every element of reality is unique, there is no good reason why the denial of real alternatives should destroy our sense of the vividness of life.¹ For what have we, on these conditions? We have a universe which is constantly changing, continually bringing forth the new. In particular, each human life, and each human choice, is something

¹ Those philosophers who say that it *must*, might well be asked to try to discover whether, in point of fact, it *does*.

that has never been before and will never be again. This world is not something fixed and once for all there ; it is a world in which new things are continually coming to be. And every human choice, since it is itself unique and helps to create a unique set of conditions, plays its part in the making of reality. How then should we say that life lacks zest or significance ?

But what one is to do to-morrow, you tell me, is already determined. I can reply only by pointing out that this is the old error which has been exposed again and again, the error of assuming that my *past* self can determine my action, but that my *present* self cannot. What I am to do to-morrow is determined only in the moment when I choose it, and is determined only by me who choose. What I who choose am, is, indeed, not something utterly disconnected with what I have been, — and if we saw clearly, we could not wish that it should be. But it still remains true that I, — the ‘ I ’ of the moment of choosing, — decide. Our objection, it seems to me, is a case of the confusion of which we have already spoken, the thought of a present self, desiring to act in a certain way and prevented from realizing its purposes by the clutch upon it of the dead hand of the past.

And here we must leave the matter. Real happenings in which we ourselves play a part, momentous decisions which we ourselves have to make, the power of determining, in no inconsiderable measure, our own future and the future of others, — all these we assert. And yet we must remember that we are not gods, but men. We are not entirely self-sufficient, not strictly independent centers of power and action ; we are part of a great whole. The same life-blood is in us which flows in the veins of these other men, our brothers. By all the subtle ties of heredity and of personal influence, our lives and our destinies are interwoven with those of countless other human beings. Such complete independence as we sometimes long for is seen, when we consider it aright, to be quite impossible. And yet, in spite of all, there is given to each of us some degree of unity, of self-direction, of uniqueness, some measure of that priceless possession which men call individuality.

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